

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TAIPEI 00193 111021Z
ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS - USIAEA

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: MNUC, PARM, IAEA, TW
SUBJECT: ROC NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENTS

REFS: (A) STATE 005719 (B) STATE 001774 (C) STATE 311109

1. ON 5 JANUARY 1978, DCM CALLED MOFA VICE MINISTER FRED CHIEN TO CONVEY REFTEL C INTERIM RESPONSES TO HIS QUESTIONS OF THE 27TH. WHEN ASKED WHERE THE ROC STOOD WITH REGARD TO OUR DEMARCHE OF 27 DECEMBER 1977, CHIEN STATED THAT A COMPLETE REPORT HAD BEEN SENT TO THE EXECUTIVE YUAN, THE ATOMIC ENERGY COUNCIL (AEC) AND THE INSTITUTE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY RESEARCH (INER), BUT THAT NO RESPONSES HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM THEM AS YET. DCM THEN ASKED CHIEN IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY WORD ON ROC REACTIONS TO THE PROPOSED EXCHANGE OF LETTERS RE PROCEDURES FOR JOINT NOTIFICATION TO THE IAEA. CHIEN RESPONDED THAT THE EXECUTIVE YUAN HAD ALREADY DECIDED TO HAVE A SMALL TEAM DISCUSS THIS SITUATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C., AND THAT HE, THEREFORE, WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO RESPOND FURTHER ON THIS QUESTION. (COMMENT: DEPARTMENT WILL REMEMBER THAT WE MADE THE 27 DECEMBER DEMARCHE AFTER THE EXECUTIVE YUAN HAD DECIDED ON THIS ISSUE, AND IT APPEARS THAT NO ONE IN MOFA IS WILLING TO CHALLENGE THEIR EARLIER DECISION.) DCM THEN SAID HE SAW NO REASON WHY WE COULD NOT DISCUSS THE SUBJECT HERE

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AND NOTED WE HAD ASKED (WHEN MAKING DEMARCHE) FOR THEIR VIEWS ON THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS. CHIEN REPLIED THAT HE WOULD ASK VICTOR CHENG TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US TO SUMMARIZE THEIR RESERVATIONS.

2. ON JANUARY 9, 1978, EMBOFF SIMMONS CONTACTED VICTOR CHENG WITHOUT SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER SUCCESS. CHENG REFUSED TO SPEAK

"OFFICIALLY" BUT STATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD SUBSTANTIVE RESERVATIONS REGARDING THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS. BASICALLY, THEY WERE AFRAID THAT THE EXCHANGE WOULD FOCUS THE ATTENTION OF IAEA'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS ON THE ROC, WHICH MAY IN TURN JEOPARDIZE THE INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDING THEY NOW ENJOY. THUS, THE ROC WOULD PREFER TO USE A SYSTEM WHERE BOTH THE IAEA AND THE U.S. ARE NOTIFIED OF ACQUISITIONS OF EQUIPMENT, MATERIAL AND FACILITIES, BUT WHERE THE U.S. IS NOT REPEAT NOT PRENOTIFIED. CHENG WOULD NOT OFFER ANY CHANGES TO THE LANGUAGE OF THE PROPOSED LETTERS BECAUSE HE FELT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS OPPOSED TO THE PRINCIPLE AS A WHOLE, NOT JUST TO THE WORDING OF THE SUGGESTED LETTERS. WITH REGARD TO THE TIMING FOR DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER, CHENG INDICATED THAT HE PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, D.C. UNTIL SOMETIME IN MID-FEBRUARY. CHENG DID MENTION THAT HE HAD PLANNED TO GO TO VIENNA IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM WITH IAEA OFFICIALS, BUT THAT THIS TRIP HAD BEEN CANCELLED BECAUSE HE HAD TO GO TO THE U.S. DURING THE PERIOD (12-21 JANUARY) TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS RELATING TO TAIPOWER'S THIRD NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.

3. FYI: DURING THE SAME SESSION, CHENG STATED THAT HE DID NOT FEEL THERE WOULD BE ANY SIGNIFICANT OBJECTIONS TO OUR DEMARCHE OF THE 27TH REGARDING THE RE-START OF THE TRR. HE EXPECTED THE OFFICIAL RESPONSE WILL BE MADE TO THE EMBASSY BY MID-JANUARY, AND THAT IT WILL INVOLVE OVERALL APPROVAL OF THE SECRET

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PROPOSALS. HE STATED THAT IT IS LIKELY THE ROC WILL AGREE TO BEAR THE COST AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR PACKING AND SHIPPING THE SPENT FUEL TO THE PORT OF EMBARKATION, BUT THAT THEY WILL URGE THAT THE U.S. ASSUME TITLE, RESPONSIBILITY AND COST FROM THAT POINT ON. HE SAID INER WILL SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE LOW ENRICHED URANIUM FUEL PROJECT, BUT WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE THE WORDING OF THE STATEMENT TO READ "TO STUDY" RATHER THAN "TO WORK."

4. COMMENT: BASED ON REFTTEL A AND THE ABOVE, WE CONCLUDE THAT THE ROC OPPOSES THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS, AND WISHES TO DISCUSS THIS ASPECT OF IMPLEMENTING OUR MUTUAL AGREEMENT IN FURTHER DETAIL IN WASHINGTON, D.C. SOMETIME IN FEBRUARY 1978. THEIR OPPOSITION HAS NOT BEEN RELAYED FORMALLY TO THE EMBASSY BECAUSE THEIR ORDERS FROM THE EXECUTIVE YUAN WERE TO SEND A TEAM TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM, AND NOT TO RAISE THEIR OBJECTIONS WITH OFFICIALS AT EMBASSY IN TAIPEI. SINCE THEIR OPPOSITION APPEARS TO FOCUS ON THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS, RATHER THAN ON DETAILS OF LANGUAGE AND PROCEDURE, WE TEND TO SUPPORT THE IDEA THAT FURTHER DISCUSSIONS SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN WASHINGTON. WE WILL LEAVE THE TIMING TO DEPARTMENT, BUT REMIND THEM THAT CHINESE

NEW YEAR FALLS ON 7 FEBRUARY.

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